

YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

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HHB 727

Legislative Action:

Introduced by: Drew Dokken  
Authored by: Drew Dokken

House Committee: \_\_\_\_\_  
House: \_\_\_\_\_  
Senate Committee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Senate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Governor: \_\_\_\_\_

Delegation: Bozeman High School

Referred to Committee: Hathaway House White Committee

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1 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "Cry Wolf"

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE MONTANA YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE:

3 Section 1: Wolves are an essential part of Montana’s history and culture. Several ranchers in  
4 neighboring states such as Wyoming and Idaho have advocated the eradication of wolves as the  
5 solution to their livestock problems. The only way to create an effective co-existence between  
6 both the wolves and the ranchers is to make sure that all ranchers are compensated after there  
7 cattle is killed by a wolf. Outside of attacks on cattle, the negative effect on the human  
8 population has been non-existent. The last recorded human killed by a wolf in the state of  
9 Montana occurred in 1830 and since then there have been no fatalities or any other accounts  
10 where a wolf pack has shown such aggression towards humans. Furthermore the reintroduction  
11 of the wolves in Yellowstone pack has brought in an immense amount of revenue to the state.  
12 This is from Tom Reed of the Yellowstone Journal corporation.

13 “Economically, the story has been extremely bright. In 1992, before wolves were  
14 reintroduced into the park, a University of Montana economist named John Duffield co-authored  
15 a study entitled "The Economics of Wolf Recovery in Yellowstone National Park." That study  
16 predicted a loss to the hunter/outfitter business on the high end of about \$500,000 per year. This  
17 would be a direct loss to hunting outfitters due to the fact that a declining elk population due to

18 wolves would mean less elk to hunt, which would mean less clients. On the flip side, the benefits  
19 to wolf recovery in terms of tourism dollars, educators, and outfitters who specialized in wildlife  
20 observation, not hunting, were predicted in the \$7-10 million annual range, a gain many times  
21 greater than the loss.” This shows that the existence of wolves has brought an immense amount  
22 of revenue, far more than would be created if we killed the wolves. In looking at the presence of  
23 wolves in Montana we can see two points. One, they have not been hostile to humans or caused  
24 any problems with the population. Two, they have generated millions of dollars of revenue for  
25 the state. However we have to acknowledge that ranching is also a viable part of Montana’s  
26 economic fabric. In order to allow the two to co-exist the Montana youth legislature advocates  
27 the ranchers to be reimbursed for their loss in cattle.

28 Section 2. We will reimburse each rancher with a total of 4,000\$ if one of their cows are killed.  
29 This year 170 cattle were killed by wolves in the Wyoming, Idaho and Montana according to the  
30 Fish and Wildlife service. So for the three states together that would have equated to 680,000 \$  
31 of reimbursement to the ranchers. Montana alone would be less than that and this year’s cow  
32 kills have been higher than usual.

33 Section 3. Funding will be through normal means

34 Section 4: This bill shall go into effect immediately upon passage.

35 **-end-**